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Letter dated 31 January 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith an aide memoire on the position of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, concerning the Turkish proposals on Cyprus, submitted to you on 20 January 2006 (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and the attached aide memoire could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Andreas D. **Mavroyiannis**

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Annex to the letter dated 31 January 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Aide memoire

30 January 2006

The position of the Government of Cyprus regarding the proposals submitted by the Turkish Government to the Secretary-General on 20 January 2006

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus wishes to outline the basic parameters of its position regarding the proposals of the Turkish Government submitted to the United Nations Secretary-General by the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, on 20 January 2006, and subsequently presented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Abdullah Gül, during a press conference held in Ankara on 23 January 2006.

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus takes note of Mr. Gül's statement, during the said press conference, that "priority should be given to finding a comprehensive settlement which would be lasting and just" and that "such a settlement in Cyprus under the good-offices mission of the United Nations Secretary-General is still attainable". It also shares Mr. Gül's "satisfaction that the United Nations Secretary-General remains engaged with the issue and he is prepared to re-launch the process once the conditions are suitable".

It is, however, difficult to see how these proposals might serve any of the above objectives. After thoroughly examining them, we have come to the conclusion that they neither contribute to the creation of the appropriate conditions for the resumption of negotiations, nor do they reflect a genuine interest in the substance of the problem they claim to address. They are problematic in terms of procedure, principle and substance. Their effect is to widen the gap between the respective positions of the Cypriot and Turkish Governments rather than assist in creating common ground. Therefore, the Government of the Republic of Cyprus is not in a position to accept the above-mentioned proposals.

There is nothing in these proposals that could be interpreted as even a slight movement of the Turkish side from their long held intransigent positions or as an expression of any willingness to address, discuss or accommodate any of the core concerns of the Greek Cypriots. On the contrary the Turkish proposals completely disregard the nature and the main parameters of the Cyprus problem. They do not seek reunification or rapprochement but the realization of goals that merely solidify Turkish interests on Cyprus while evading the fulfilment of the most essential conditions that govern Turkey's accession process to the European Union

The first six points in the "action plan" described in the Turkish proposals are a mere repetition of previous proposals submitted by the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Secretary-General, last May (A/59/820-S/2005/355). The response of the Cyprus Government to the proposals submitted then is still valid (see A/59/857-S/2005/422).

return of Varosha to its lawful inhabitants and a moratorium on the exploitation of Greek Cypriot properties in the occupied areas of the Republic.

Our major contribution to the collective effort for the creation of the appropriate conditions and the preparation of the ground for the resumption of the United Nations negotiations remains, however, the political will and courage demonstrated by the Republic of Cyprus, in its capacity as an EU member State, when significant decisions were to be taken by the European Union concerning the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey. In spite of our predicament we have consistently adopted a constructive approach. It is high time now that Turkey honours its own commitments and obligations stemming from its accession negotiations with the European Union, including the unconditional ratification and implementation of the Additional Protocol to the Ankara Agreement extending the customs union to the 10 new EU member States, providing for the immediate removal of all restrictions on Cyprus flagged vessels and vessels serving Cyprus trade, as well as the lifting of all discriminatory measures against member States' carriers on the basis of their nationality. Turkey needs also to stop vetoing Cyprus participation in international organizations and take steps towards normalization of bilateral relations between Turkey and Cyprus, as called for in the Accession Partnership.

In conclusion, we firmly believe that the content of the Turkish proposals cannot be considered as falling within the framework of the Secretary-General's mission of good offices and does not constitute any positive movement from the Turkish side, nor does it represent a genuine contribution towards the settlement of the Cyprus problem. It is obvious that the insistence of Turkey on the projection of a separate entity in the occupied part of Cyprus using as a pretext the so-called isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community, and its attempt to exchange the achievement of this goal in return for the fulfilment of its contractual obligations towards the European Union, is a counterproductive and sterile approach and does not serve the purpose of our collective efforts to create the right conditions for the resumption of the United Nations negotiations on Cyprus.

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus remains committed to a fair and sustainable resolution of the Cyprus problem. It reiterates its willingness to engage, following thorough preparation of the ground, in meaningful and substantive negotiations, without arbitration and strict deadlines, in order to reach a comprehensive settlement in accordance with the Security Council resolutions and the principles upon which the EU was founded.